

4475. g 38
A remarkable Scripture Prophecy of Deliverance from Enemies, and the Restoration of Peace and Plenty, and Continuance and Establishment of the true Religion, considered: And applied to Great Britain and Ireland, at this Time.

I N A

10.

S E R M O N,

Preached in the

C H U R C H of U R N E Y,

I N T H E

D I O C E S E of D E R R Y,

On *Wednesday* the 18th of *December*, 1745.

B E I N G

The Publick F A S T-D A Y, solemnly kept
upon Account of the present War abroad, and Rebellion
in Great Britain.

By WILLIAM HENRY, M. A. Rector of Urney, and Chaplain to
his Grace JOSIAH, Lord Archbishop of Tuam.

*Why do the Heathen so furiously rage together? and why do the People imagine a vain Thing?
The Kings of the Earth stand up against the Lord, and against his Anointed.*

He that dwelleth in Heaven shall laugh them to Scorn: The Lord shall have them in Derision.
P S A L M II.

D U B L I N:

Printed for PETER WILSON, Bookfeller, at Gay's-Head, opposite the Spring-
Garden, in Dame-street. M,DCC,XLVI.

Given in New York, Michigan,
and for Peter Wilson, Bookbinder, in Detroit, Michigan, opposite the ferry.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

P H I L I P Earl of *Chesterfield*,

Lord Lieutenant of *Ireland*, &c. &c. &c.

The following Discourse, (humbly calculated to warm us to Virtue, to confirm our Courage, and exalt our Hopes, under His Majesty's auspicious Reign) is, with the utmost Esteem, Respect, and Humility,

Inscribed by

His Excellency's

most obedient,

and most dutiful

Servant,

W I L. H E N R Y.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY
PHILIP Earl of Chesterfield,
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, &c. &c.

Advertisement.

Just Published, (written by the Reverend Mr. WIL. HENRY)

A PHILIPPIC ORATION against the Pretender's Son, and his Adherents. Addressed to the Protestants of the North of Ireland.
Price Three-pence.

Also, (by the same Author)

RELIGION and VIRTUE the Foundation of COURAGE and VICTORY. A Sermon preached in the Church of Urney, in the Diocese of Derry, on the 11th of April, 1744. being the Publick Fast-Day. Price Six-pence Halfpenny.

Printed for PETER WILSON, at Gay's-Head, opposite the Spring-Garden, in Dame Street.



A

S E R M O N, &c.

JOEL II. Chap. xii. xiii. xviii. xix. xx. Ver.

- xii. *Therefore also now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even unto me with all your Heart, and with Fasting, and with Weeping, and with Mourning.*
- xiii. *And rent your Heart, and not your Garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: For he is gracious and merciful, slow to Anger, and of great Kindness, and repenteth him of the Evil.*
- xviii. *Then will the Lord be jealous for his Land, and pity his People.*
- xix. *Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his People, --- I will no more make you a Reproach among the Heathen.*
- xx. *But I will remove far from you the Northern Army, and will drive him into a Land barren and desolate, with his Face towards the East Sea, and his hinder Part towards the utmost Sea; and his Stink shall come up, and his ill Savour shall come up, because he hath done great things.*

THE solemn and humble Manner in which we and our Fellow-subjects throughout *Great Britain and Ireland* are assembled this Day, in obedience to the religious Commands of our gracious *King*, is a publick Acknowledgment of two Points, which deserve to be well weighed by us upon this Occasion, "That our Country is groaning under some heavy Calamity," and "That our Misconduct and Offences against God have contributed to bring it on."

I would hope, that among the Numbers which gather to our religious Assemblies at this Time, there are few so atheistical in their Principles, so insensible to the Distress of their Country, or so regardless of their own Salvation, as to appear there, only to act a Part: Like the hypocritical *Rulers of Judah*, whom *Ezekiel* reproves, who came in an humble Posture to enquire of God, and yet retained their Vices in their Hearts, and thereby challenged the divine Justice to pour out the heavier Vengeance on them

Ezek. xiv. 4.

and their Country. I would rather be persuaded, that the noble Zeal you have already shewn for the Preservation of your sacred Religion and Liberties, disposes every one among us to this pious Inquiry, "How shall I appease the Wrath of Heaven? How shall I contribute to remove the present, and avert greater Calamities from my Country?"

To all those who are thus piously inquisitive, it may be acceptable and useful, to consider "The particular Procedure of Divine Providence towards the Nation of *Judah*, in the Instance which is the Subject of this Prophecy, the Instructions given to them, and the Event."

And then "to bring these Particulars home to the Circumstances of our own Country at this Time."

In our Inquiry into the former of these Points, it will readily occur to those who are acquainted with the History of the Common-wealth of *Israel*, That God gave them a Law from Heaven. The Observance of this Law he fenced with the most solemn Sanctions of Rewards and Punishments. As the Reward to encourage their Obedience, and in a great measure the natural Consequence of it, he promised them all kind of temporal Felicity: Health, Peace and Plenty in their private Capacities; and, in their national Capacity, Grandeur, and Empire, and Glory among all the Nations around them.----The Contrary of all these he threatened them with, as the just Punishment of their Disobedience.

Nor were these Threats mere empty Thunders, whose Noise might affright, but were not pointed to wound them. So often as they made the unhappy Experiment, they found them too true.---They, who attend to the Nature and Relations of Society, will readily perceive, that the habitual Disregard to those Laws whereby a Kingdom is cemented and united together, will soon loosen and weaken it in all its Joints; abate that manly Spirit and healthful Vigour which is the Genius and Beauty of a Nation; and creates a Love and Awe for it in neighbouring States; relax the Nerves and Powers of Government; and soon reduce the whole Body Politick to a feeble consumptive State.---And, as the Wealth, the Industry, the Health, the Peace of Individuals, do all depend upon that of the Publick; when this suffers, all these must be proportionably impaired.

Beside, the just Governor of the World is bound to maintain the Dignity and Honour of his own Laws.

Accordingly we find, that as often as the People of *Israel* broke loose from God's Laws, he let loose upon them one or more of his ordinary Judgments, a Famine, a Pestilence, the Sword of their Enemies, or the wild

wild Beasts, which came roaring on them from the neighbouring Deserts, and devoured them and their Cattle; for which Reason these are, by the Prophet *Ezekiel* called, God's *four sore Judgments*. Ezek. xiv. 21

But now, when the Pride and Insolence of their Vices grew to such an Height, as that they probably disregarded God's ordinary Judgments, and, in their Infidelity, ascribed them only to the common Course of Nature; God's Justice is roused to send an uncommon Judgment among them, an Army of Locusts and other Vermine, to devour all the Fruits of the Earth, and thereby bring on them the extreme Miseries of Poverty, Famine, and Pestilence. By this signal Judgment he gives them to understand, that as in the Days of their Fathers Deliverance, he made Swarms of Lice and other Vermine humble the Pride of an haughty *Pharaoh*; so now that they had hardened themselves against his other Punishments, he would not honour them so much in his inflicting Vengeance, as to send a glorious Angel with his drawn Sword to destroy, nor a mighty Monarch with an Army of hardy Veterans to conquer, nor even those noble Beasts the Lions to devour; but would make the most contemptible Insects the swift Messengers of his Wrath, and Instruments to humble the Arrogance and Infidelity of those who dared to despise his Providence.

As to the particular Period wherein this heavy Stroke fell on the Kingdom of *Judah*, the sacred History is not express. The most probable Opinion is, that it was under the Reign of *Manasseh*, in whose Time the Impieties of that Nation rose to a greater Height than at any Time before. For the Prophet does not mention the Kingdom of *Israel*, as it had been destroyed some time before; he takes notice of the Temple still standing at *Jerusalem*, and at the same Time of a Captivity which the *Jews* had suffered. The powerful *Assyrian* King, who had imprisoned their King, sold the principal Citizens to the Merchants of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, who sold them again for Slaves to the *Grecians* and other foreign Nations.

But whatever was the Time, the Prophet describes the Approach of this Judgment in such awful Terms and lively Allusions, as might be apt to awaken even the most befotted *Drunkards*; as may be seen at large through this and the preceding Chapter.---And in as much as they had still Chap. i 5 fresh in their Minds the dreadful Miseries which their Country suffered from the Invasion by the *Assyrian* Army, he, to affect them the more deeply, represents the Progress of these Locusts under the Metaphor of an innumerable, invincible, and well-disciplined Army, marching with a rapid Progress through their Country; devouring all the Fruits of the Earth; storming

storming their Cities; plundering their Houses; spreading universal Terror before them, and leaving dismal Havock and Desolation behind them.---- These infinite Swarms of Locusts were bred in the Sands of the desert *Arabia*, and from thence, after a Season of great Drought, taking their Flight, they made towards *Syria*, and the northern Borders of *Palestine*; thence turning Southward, they spread over the Country of *Judea*; and, from this their Course, are called by the Prophet the *Northern Army*.

The Justice of this Metaphor and the Description used by the Prophet, is confirmed by the Account which all natural Historians, who take notice of the Locusts, give us of them.--- *Agur* tells us, that *they go forth by Bands*. *Damiris* tells us, that the *Arabians* observe, " That the Locusts assemble " in regular Order as an Army; when their first Ranks move, all march " in their Order; and when these halt, the rest do the same." The same is observed by *Sigebert*, of the Locusts which, in the Year 874, invaded *France*. *St. Jerome*, who was an Eye-witness to the Order wherein the Locusts march, says, that they proceed in a Body as regular and compact together as a pavement, every one keeping his place, in so much that they do not in the least Point, or with so much as the Variation of one of their Claws, change their Situation in respect to one another.---- *Pliny* says, that " they fly with such a Noise, that one would take it to be a vast Flock of " great Birds."---- This their Union, Velocity and Order gives them that mighty Force, that *St. Cyrill* says, " their Irruption is altogether invincible " by human Power."--- All Travellers agree, that they fly together in so compact and thick a Cloud, that they intercept the Rays of the Sun, and Sight of the Skies, and that for many Miles together: So just is that Account of the Prophet, *The Sun and the Moon shall be dark, and the Stars shall withdraw their Shining*.

No wonder that such a gloomy Cloud, big with Ruin, hovering over a Country, and some of the Harbingers of this formidable Army already beginning the Desolation, should strike an universal Pannick and Consternation, and, as the Prophet says, *All Faces should gather Blackness*.

But the Business of the Prophet is not meerly to affright and terrify his Countrymen, and add to that Confusion and Horror which had already seized them. He awakens them, in order to save them, and That they might attend the better to the Advice which, by the Command of God, he was about to offer them, how they might escape the mighty Ruin.

The Advice which he offers is *first* directed to each Person in his private Capacity,---and *then*, to the collective Body of the Nation.

To

To each particular Man he introduces God, saying, " Turn ye unto me with all your Heart ; with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. Rent your Hearts, and not your Garment, and turn unto the Lord." He plainly summoneth them to a real, an effectual, and a thorough Reformation; to that humility and seriousness in Behaviour which was suitable to such a season of Distress ; and cautions them against the delusion of trusting to their outward Performances, the demure affected Aspect, the rent Garment, the usual Habit of Mourners, while their Hearts were still hardened, and their Vices not rent from them.

When Men had sincerely begun their Reformation in private, they were then prepared for the second Advice he offers to them in a collective body, as a Nation. This is to celebrate a most solemn Fast and Humiliation, whereof the Rules and Form are prescribed in the 15, 16, 17 Verses. *Blow the Trumpet in Zion, sanctify a Fast, call a solemn Assembly. Gather the People ; sanctify the Congregation ; assemble the Elders (or Rulers) ; gather the Children and those that suck the Breasts ;* that the Distress of these helpless Innocents may the more deeply affect the Parents and others. *Let the Bridegroom go forth of his Chamber and the Bride out of her Closet ;* let a stop be put to even the most lawful occasions of Joy. *Let the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, weep between the Porch and the Altar ;* that is, while the People are humbling themselves in the outer Court of the Temple, let them from their conspicuous station in the inner Court, between the Altar for Burnt-offerings and the Porch, without presuming at such a time to approach near to the Temple itself, offer up their fervent Supplications for their Country, and particularly use this Form, *Spare thy People, O Lord, and give not thine Heritage to reproach ; that the Heathen should Rule over them : Wherefore should they say among the People, " Where is their God?"*

As the publick Calamity reached all Ranks of Persons, none were to be exempted, High or Low, Magistrates or People, Great or Small, Parents or Children, from bearing their part in the publick Humiliation.

The Prophet having prescribed to them the Remedy, and persuaded them to comply, now alters his awful Stile, and revives their drooping Spirits with the most comfortable Promises, of their not only being delivered from the present dreadful Calamity ; but also their receiving greater Blessings than before. He encourages the Hopes of Men in their private Reformation, from the goodness of the Divine Nature, particularly from that glorious Name whereby Almighty God declared himself to their great Law-giver Moses : *The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to Anger, and of great kindness,*

ness, and repenteth him of the Evil. Who knoweth if he will return and Repent?

In his Encouragement to the Nation upon their publick Humiliation, he is more full and express: *The Lord will be jealous for his Land, and pity his People. He will say to his People, I will send you Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and ye shall be satisfied therewith; and, in Answer to your publick Form of Prayer, I will no more make you a Reproach among the Heathen.* As a sure Pledge of his future Favour, he promises to deliver them immediately from the present Calamity; *I will remove far off from you the Northern Army, and will drive him to a Land barren and desolate, with his Face towards the East Sea, and his hinder Parts towards the utmost Sea, and his stink shall come up; that is, that by some mighty Storm he would scatter that vile Army of Vermin, driving some part of them into the Deserts of Arabia, others into the Mediterranean, and the remainder into the Red-Sea, where they should stink and corrupt, and raise noisome Pestilences among those neighbouring Nations, who had scoffed at them in their Distress: Nor is this all; when God once begins to shew Favour to his People upon their Repentance, he opens his Hand liberally, and his Blessings flow amain. He promises to them, in the sequel of this Prophecy, double Plenty, Peace, and publick Honour; My People never shall be ashamed: And as if all these were but a light Thing, he promises to them the Establishment and Increase of true Religion, by pouring out his Spirit plentifully upon them, and their Posterity.*

If we allow the Occasion of this Prophecy to have fallen out under *Mannasseh*, all these Promises were in a great measure accomplished to that very Generation, under the peaceful, pious, and glorious Reign of the good King *Josiah*; but most compleatly fulfilled upon the Ascension of Christ, when the Gospel was published from *Jerusalem*, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, and from thence diffused to all Nations in the World. To which particular great Event, the Apostle *Peter* expressly

Acts ii. 16. applies the last Part of this famous Prophecy.

Thus you have seen the equal Procedure of the Divine Providence towards the Nation of *Judah*, in this Instance: Their Sin, their Punishment, their Duty, their Repentance private and publick, God's Pardon thereupon, his Promises of Deliverance and manifold Blessings, and the happy Accomplishment.

Now all these things happened to them for our Ensamples. We are not to entertain so narrow and unworthy Notions of the supreme Governor of the World,

World, as if he had a partial Concern for that Nation, and did not rule all others upon Earth with the like equal, righteous, and wise Providence. *Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yea, of the Gentiles also.* Rom. iii. 29.

It becomes us therefore, with much Humility and Seriousness, to consider our present Condition, and to apply these several Particulars to our own, and our Country's Circumstances at this Time.

Upon a strict Inquiry, we shall find our Circumstances parallel to theirs in many Particulars; in our Privileges, our Offences, our Punishment, the Instructions recommended to us. I pray God they may also be like theirs, in our private and publick Reformation, and in the happy Consequences of it.

Did God give a Law to the *Jews*? He has done the same or more by us.---He spoke to them by *Moses* and the Prophets; but to us by his own Son, whom he sent from Heaven to publish among Mankind that most perfect System of virtuous Precepts, and excellent Privileges, the glorious *Gospel*, the main Design of which is to teach and persuade us to live *Soberly, Righteously, and Godly*, in this World, and to look for an happy Immortality in the next: Thus to make us like to God in his moral Perfections, and thereby exalt Human Nature to its utmost Perfection. Titus ii. 12.

After this divine Lamp had been for many Ages obscured, and almost extinguished by the Usurpations, Superstition, and gainful Inventions of the Church of *Rome*, and a Barbarity and Idolatry, which would have shocked the old Pagans, introduced in its stead, God was pleased to cause this pure Light to break forth again in all its native Splendour among us, at the *Blessed Reformation*. Since that joyful Period of the Illumination and Conversion of these Kingdoms, which, no doubt, the Angels celebrate in their heavenly Hymns, the Truth of the Gospel has shined clearly, and every one may have the Oracles of God in his own Hands. Luke xv. 10.

The Enemies of our Liberties and Faith, the Emissaries and Agents of the Church of *Rome*, those *Locusts* which have often ascended out of the *Smoke of this bottomless Pit*, have made frequent Attempts to darken the Light of Heaven again; but all these have hitherto ended in their Confusion, and the firmer Establishment of our civil and religious Rights. Rev. ix. 3.

Let us now act impartially, and put the Question to our own Consciences. Have we lived as Children of the Light? Have we ordered our Conversation according to this excellent Law?---I care not to be the Accuser

fer of any Man, much less of my Country : every Man's Conscience will inform and admonish him, if he will permit it.

Some one may say, What need is there for this Inquiry ? Is it not notorious, that we have the purest Profession of Religion, and the Worship of the true God among us ? So had the *Jews*, and they were not a little exalted in their confidence upon account of this privilege. When the *Jer. vii. 4.* Prophets threatened them with any Danger, they cried out, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord* are these. This Word was the *Charm* to secure them from all Evils. Yet the Prophet *Jeremiah* tells them, in that Passage, that *These were but lying Words that cannot profit. Will ye Steal, Murder, commit Adultery, Swear falsely, and come and stand before me in this House ? Is my House become a Den of Robbers in your Eyes ?---I have seen it, saith the Lord !* We cannot suppose that God will regard or protect the meer Forms and outward Shadows of Religion, when the Life and Power of it is gone.

Let every Man therefore look narrowly into his own Heart, as he is sure the piercing Eye of God's Justice will, and examine whether the mighty Powers of the Christian Religion have a proper Effect upon him ; whether he be influenced thereby to live soberly, to keep his Body in Temperance and Chastity, and his Mind free from tumultuous Passions ; to be strictly just and righteous in all his Dealings ; to be kind, forgiving and charitable to all Mankind ; to be humbly devout, without Hypocrisy or Ostentation, towards God ; and always to pay with a cheerful Heart that Worship, Adoration and Praise which is due to the supreme Governor of the World, from all intelligent Creatures, but more especially from Christians. If we find that this is our Temper, that such hath been our past Conduct, we may call ourselves the *Blessed of the Lord* ; all things are right, and we need fear no Evil.

But if we look to ourselves and round about us, and find things in a quite different State ; that Religion and Virtue (as *Brutus* cried out among the *Romans*) are become but a Name ; if we see all kinds of sensual Vices rampant among us ; Men besotted with Drunkenness, emasculated with Fornication, Adultery, and all sorts of Uncleanneſs ; our Country smeared over with Riot and Luxury ; if the native Honesty and manly Candour of *Britons* be degenerated into low Cunning and Jobbing ; if *Isa. i. 23.* some great Men, as *Isaiab* complained, are become rebellious, and Companions of Thieves, and would exalt themselves on the Ruins of their Country ; if among the lower Sort, some catch at all Advantages to defraud and overreach,

reach, and too many openly steal and rob in Defiance of the Laws; if Men have fallen into an habitual Neglect of Devotion, and all the Duties of Piety towards God, and act as if they could do as well without him and his Providence; if secret Prayer, which keeps up the Power of Religion, is disused, publick Worship attended but rarely, or only for form sake, and even the most solemn Ordinances and Sacraments received with Irreverence. These are too sure Indications that the Fear of God is departing from us; and if that be once gone, we may have Reason to fear, that his Protection, which is our Glory, will soon depart after it.

1 Sam.
iv. 22.

I am unwilling to mention the prophane Contempt which has been openly cast upon the Christian Religion, and the blasphemous Scoffs (instead of sober Inquiries) which we have tamely endured to be every-where published against it:--- An Impiety and Insult suffered by no Nation upon the Face of the Earth except our own. *Hath a Nation changed their Gods, which yet are no Gods! But my People have changed their Glory for that which doth not profit!* ---What could we gain, if Christianity, which teaches manly Virtue and unaffected Piety, were abolished, and Infidelity established in its stead!---As the Minds of Mankind are so disposed that they will not, they cannot, live without some Forms of Religion; we should gain nothing in the end by this Change, but either the old Pagan Idolatry, or Popish Superstition, which is as bad; and we have Reason to apprehend, that this latter is what some of the Ringleaders among our Infidels have been driving at.

Jer. ii. 11.

One thing, it is to be feared, too many in these Kingdoms have already gained by the spreading of Infidelity; a Disrespect to publick Authority, and a most scandalous Lewdness in speaking and writing against the *Rulers of the People*. They who do not *fear God*, will scarce *honour the King*: They who do not regard the Christian Faith, have thrown off the strongest Bond of Allegiance to our gracious *Sovereign*, who is appointed by Providence, and bound by his Coronation Oath, to be its *Defender*. And how far the spreading of these Principles has contributed towards the present unnatural *Rebellion*, is well worth the Care of wise Men to consider.

If this be too much the State of our Case, can we imagine a great and righteous God to be (like *Epicurus's* Logs) an idle Spectator? *Will he not visit for these things?* ---He will; but may it be only in the way of fatherly Correction, and not of Vengeance! He hath visited us with some sharp Rebukes already.

Jer. v. 29.

D

We

We have been above six Years engaged in a War with *Spain*, and near two Years with *France*. These Wars are just, and absolutely necessary for the Protection of our Trade, the Preservation of our civil and religious Rights, the Security of all that can be valuable to a great and free People, and the Support of the Liberties of *Europe*, against the proud Invaders of them. If we consider the Ruin of many private Fortunes, the publick Expence, the immediate Check to Commerce and Industry, and above all the Havock of a great Part of the human Race; all Wars, however just, necessary or successful, cannot but be looked upon as a publick Calamity.

When we consider the vast Addition made to the *British* Empire in *America* and our naval Strength, by the Acquisition of *Cape Breton*; the Ruin of our Enemies Trade, cutting their very Sinews, by the Capture of their Ships; and our Success in giving an Emperor to *Germany*: We have great Cause to thank God for these mighty Advantages.---But when, on the other hand, we reflect on the Checks given this last Campaign, to our own, and all the Armies of our Allies on the Continent; the Loss of many brave Men, who died in the glorious Cause of their Country's Liberty; the Wreck of many of our Ships; the vast Addition made to the formidable Power of *France*, by the Acquisition of all *Flanders*; and the Ruin and Terror which, from thence, hangs over the Heads of our natural Friends and Protestant Allies, the *United Provinces*: We must acknowledge, that the *French Monarch*, like the proud *Assyrian* king of old, is a Rod in the Hand of God shaken over us;--- and we have Reason, with *Isa. x. 5.* *David*, to sing of God's Judgment as well as of his Mercy.

Nor have we escaped God's other Judgments, Sickness and Scarcity of Bread.--- In the Year 1741, God was pleased to visit this Kingdom with a grievous Scarcity, and a most nauseous Disorder, which raged like a Pestilence, swept away many Thousands, and depopulated many entire Villages in the Southern Counties; the Carcases of Men and Women were left like Dung in the Fields and along the Highways, not even their nearest Friends daring, for fear of the Infection, to draw near and bury them.

After this, God, in his Mercy and Pity towards his People, restored us Health, and two Harvests of uncommon Plenty.---Let us Lay our Hand upon our Heart,---What Use did we make of this? Did not we grow wanton in our Sins, and kick against Providence? Did not the lower People almost every-where refuse to labour? Did not the Farmers murmur and cry

cry out, "That they were ruined;" and, O shocking Impiety! some were so wicked as to blaspheme God for his very Blessings!

God hearkened and observed, and gave Men their impious Wish: He blasted the Fruits of the Earth the following Harvest so generally, that had we not been early relieved from abroad, and that at the Expence of all the Riches in the Country, the half of the Inhabitants of the populous Province of *Ulster*, and of the neighbouring Counties of *Conaught*, must have miserably perished.

Nor did God's chastening Hand hold here.---To testify to us, that he rejected with Disdain our formal Fasting and Humiliation, while we did not amend our Lives, he sent upon us, on our very last *Publick Fast Day*, such an uncommon Storm of Snow and Hail, as barred up most of our Churches; as if he had said to us, as to the *Jews*, *Will ye continue in your Sins, and Come and stand before me? Pray not for this People; neither lift up a Cry nor Prayer for them; neither make Intercession to me, for I will not hear.* This sore Tempest lay so long on the Face of our Country, that it destroyed, by a moderate Computation, the half of our Cattle; and all of us in this part of the Kingdom, High and Low, are still severely pinched by the poverty and distresses which that Season, the badness of this last Harvest, and the Discouragement of our Linnen Manufacture have brought on. *For all this God's Anger was not turned away, but his Hand has been stretched out still.* Jer. vii. 16. Isa. ix. 12.

He sent a new and unsuspected Judgment; he has visited *Great Britain*, and in them us, (for they are our Parents, our Protectors, and our whole Happiness depends on theirs) by permitting a most unnatural and wicked *Rebellion* to break out in that Kingdom.

The *Son* of the abjured and detested *Popish Pretender*, accompanied with a few Out-laws and Fugitives, lands in the wild *Highlands* of *Scotland*; there soon gathers a gang of Plunderers and Robbers; herds of the same kind of wild Beasts flock in, under desperate Leaders, from all Parts; they form an Army, seize *Edinburgh*, defeat shamefully our King's Forces, under Sir *John Cope*; levy heavy Contributions off the principal Cities, and commit cruel havock and plunder over all that antient Kingdom: Nor did they stop here; they march into *England*, raise an universal Alarm; seize many principal Towns, ravage and make havock around them; and, trusting to the Aid of our inveterate and perfidious Enemy, the *French King*, thought of no less than the total Subversion of our happy Constitution, the Destruction of our gracious King, our Religion,

gion, our Liberties. This was the Attempt; and such was the Progress of that Army of Slaves, as much abhorred and detested by the Body of the *Scotch* Nation, as by us: I say *Slaves*, for it is too well known, that the common People of the *Highlands* still continue Slaves under their Chiefs, notwithstanding the excellent Laws made for their Liberty.---I must crave the pardon of those Lords and Gentlemen who joined with, or led them on, for giving *them* also this odious, but just Name. For what else can they be but *Slaves*, who would prefer a *Vice-Roy* under *France*, to a gracious King, who has shewn himself always the *Father of his People*? A despotick Power, to our Free Constitution? and the blind Bigottry and Superstition of Popery, to Liberty of Conscience and the Protestant Religion? Who but Slaves, after God has, by an out-stretched Arm, by many signal Interpositions of his Providence, delivered these Nations from Tyranny and Bondage, could ever think of *choosing this new Captain, to lead them back again into Egypt*?

Num.
xiv. 4.

The rapid Progress of these Rebels, sallying out of their barren Mountains, and the Ruin they scattered round them, is strongly painted to us, in the Words which the Prophet makes use of in this Chapter to describe the Progress of the Army of Locusts and other Vermin, which issued out of the Desert of *Arabia*. *A Fire devoured before them, and behind them a Flame burned: The Land was as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate Wilderness. Nothing did escape them. They ran to and fro in the Cities; they ran upon the Walls, they climbed up into the Houses, they entered in at the Windows like a Thief.* No wonder then that the People who were quietly enjoying the Sweets of Liberty, and never suspecting such a sudden Irruption, should be struck with Consternation; that the Inhabitants of the Places through which they passed, or were expected, *should be much pained, and all Faces should gather Blackness.*

But God, who sets restraining Bounds to all the infernal Powers, and suffered this Storm to fly through the Land, not to destroy, but to awaken and correct us, has now, when their Hopes and our Apprehensions were risen to the highest, and they threatened to approach *London*, defeated the Designs of these Rebels. He observed that serious Spirit of Repentance which has begun amongst us; he heard our earnest Prayers, and has given such Success to our King's Son, the gallant Prince *William*, and the brave Forces under him, that, with the utmost Terror and Precipitation, they have fled back the Way by which they came. The Carcases of many Hundreds of these Rebels are left as *Dung to fat the Earth.*

The

The Sword of Justice is making sharp, to reward the Robberies, the Murders, and Treason of others; and the poor remnant, which may escape to their own barren Mountains, will be the abhorrence of all honest Men; and a continual stench in the Nostrils of that perfidious Court abroad, and those secret Traitors at home, who encouraged them to this wickedness.---The Prophecy in the Text hath already been in part, and, we trust, will soon be fully accomplished on them. "I will remove far off from you the *Northern Army*, and will drive him into a Land barren and desolate:---And his stink shall come up."

Thus I have laid before you, with much plainness, and as briefly as the Subject and Occasion will admit, the course of God's Providence towards us; his giving us a Law, our Offences against it, his Judgments, and his Mercy.---These things have a distinct Voice, and cry loudly to us.

Among Men there are various ways of communicating our Sentiments and Desires to one another; by Words, by Signs, or by Actions; yet all these are allowed to be clear and expressive: Why may we not, in like manner, allow the Supreme Governor of the World, to speak to his Intelligent Creatures?

If we would have God to speak to us in plain Words, let us look into the Scriptures; particularly let us at this time of seriousness, read the Book of *Deuteronomy*, the prophecies of *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, or *Ezekiel*, or the prophecies of our Saviour concerning the *Jewish* state; and they will teach us as plainly the Design and Will of God, as if he should cause the Heavens to open, and discover an Angel sounding a Trumpet in our Ears.

Or if we would choose rather that God should speak to us by Signs and his Works: Do not the signal interpositions of his Providence, which are adapted to our different Conduct, clearly express his Will? Our Saviour upbraided the *Jews*, that they could know the various Appearances of the *Sky*, yet could not discern the Signs of the Times.---These all have a distinct Voice: The sound of them is gone through all the Land, and there is no one, that will attend, from whom the Light is hid. And what is their Instruction? What is it they Cry? Let us hear the Voice of the Rod. It is in my Text, Turn ye unto me with all your Heart, and with Fasting, and with Weeping, and with Mourning: The call is repeated, Rent your Heart and not your Garment, and turn unto the Lord your God: That is, "Begin, go through, and fully accomplish, not a formal, but a sincere, an humble, and an effectual Reformation.

Math. xvi.

Psal. xix. 4.

Mich. vi. 9

We are openly professing this Day a Sorrow for our past Offences, and our solemn Resolutions of amendment; and I believe, from the sense we have of God's Judgments, and of the necessity of living under a greater dependance on his Providence, this good work is performed by all ranks of Persons with more Sincerity and Zeal than upon former Occasions.

In order to keep up this good Temper and pious Resolution, we must not content ourselves with the publick Performance, but let every Person consider in private with himself, what are the particular Sins whereof his Conscience is afraid? What is the Vice to which he is most addicted? Of these let him deeply repent; and against the danger of sliding back into them, let him set himself with all his Might.--And to confirm and strengthen our Vows, we have now an happy opportunity at hand, to renew our Covenant with God, on the solemn Festival of our Saviour's Nativity.

Heb. ix. 14. The *purging of our Consciences from dead Works*, will happily dispose us to fulfill all the duties of active Piety and Virtue, to *serve the living God*, with a living Zeal; and our King and Country with true Spirit and Courage.

We have, in this time of Confusion and Danger, shewn an hearty Affection and most dutiful Attachment to our most gracious King, and his Royal and illustrious Family, by our solemn Associations, our Oaths of Allegiance, and our Cheerfulness for his Service. Let us keep up still the same good Spirit; for the *mystery of Iniquity is still active; an evil Spirit is yet working in the Children of Disobedience*, and Rebellion.

Above all, that the *Glory of God may dwell in our Land*, let us endeavour to revive the Spirit of true Piety and Religion; I do not mean a mere pompous Affectation, and *Cant* of Religion, which has often been made use of by Knaves and Hypocrites to cover the vilest Practices; but such an unfeigned love and reverence to God and our Saviour, as will dispose us to worship him with all possible Decency, Humility, and Gratitude; and from a principle of Honour towards him and his Commands, to do all good to Mankind, and to *keep ourselves unspotted from the World*. Our trust in God is, that it is the unfeigned Purpose and unalterable Resolution of every one, and of all Ranks of Men, from this Day forward, to set about this good Work.

Of our gracious King, as *Supreme Head of the Church*, whom God hath established (and may he long continue him) to be the Defender, and Pattern of our Faith.

His

His Royal Family, those *Stars* held and protected in the Right Hand of Rev. i. 16. God, to be a Blessing to these Kingdoms, and to direct and sway others, by their Light and Influence.

Our Nobility and Gentry, whose Example is a kind of Law to those of Lower Ranks, and might soon make Religion and Virtue Fashionable.

Magistrates, by curbing Vice and Profaness.---Ministers, by exhorting incessantly to Virtue.---Masters of Families and Parents, by introducing and keeping up the fear of God in their Houses, and instructing Children and Servants in Religious and *Loyal* Principles.

All private Persons, by their regular Deportment, and their friendly Advices, and Conversation.

Did all Persons thus *Associate* themselves together, to promote with one Consent, the honour of our great Master; what a blessed People should we be? what a *Glorious* figure would our Country soon make? Nay, did ^{Psal. xxxv.} but even a few Men, obstinately just, and firm to the Cause of God and ^{9.} Virtue, exert themselves with a manly Zeal, they might contribute more to a general Reformation than they can well imagine.---History affords us many Instances, where, even in a doubtful or superstitious Cause, the Ardour and Spirit of a single Person, has produced a general Effect. *Peter the Hermit* did, by his indefatigable Pains, raise all *Europe*, and arm every Prince in *Christendom* to the *Holy War*.

The *Maid of Orleans* recovered the Spirit of the *French*, after it was sunk to the lowest degree, and their Country conquered; and exalted it to such a pitch, that they soon recovered all, and became at once invincible.

What therefore might not even a few good Men hope to bring about, who are engaged in a better Cause, and have more powerful Motives? Who have Hearts possessed with all the Powers of the World to come, their Souls full of God, and a glorious Ardour for the Happiness of their Country?---And their Spirits supported with the full assurance of God's Assistance?

To encourage one and all of us to set about this good Work, let us observe what God hath already done for us, in dispersing the Army of Rebels, as soon as we began to set ourselves in earnest to repent and turn to him.

And for our further Comfort, we need do no more than apply to ourselves and Country, the Promises made in this very Chapter.---God, who has always been watchful over our Religion and Liberties, *will be jealous for* v. 18. *his Land, and pity his People; he will no more make us a reproach among the* v. 19. *Heathen; he will not suffer the French, Spaniards, or neighbouring Nations*

tions to Scoff at us; *we shall never be ashamed.*---He will also restore us
 24, 26. Plenty.---Our Floors shall be full of Wheat.---We shall eat in Plenty and be
 satisfied: And what is the greatest Blessing of all, *he will pour out his Spirit*
upon us, and according to the Prophecy in the last Verses of this Chapter,
confirm, and long continue the glorious Gospel among us in all it's Light and
Purity.

Now that we may be intitled to all these comfortable Promises, I shall
 conclude this Exhortation with the fervent Prayer offered up by the great
 Prophet *Elijah*, upon the publick Conversion of the Kingdom of *Israel*,
 in which I intreat you all to join.

1 Kings
 xviii. 37- " Hear us, O Lord, hear us, that this People may know that thou art
 the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their Heart back again."

The Lord, he is the God! The Lord, he is the God! And may we be
his People, through all Generations! Amen!

F I N I S



